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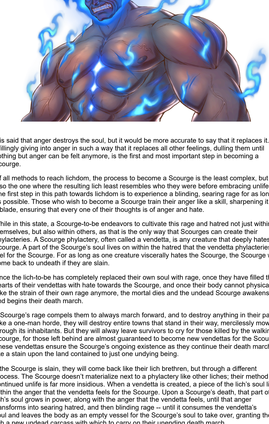
The Scourge

A Pointy Hat Barbarian Lich



It is said that anger destroys the soul, but it would be more accurate to say that it replaces it. Willingly giving into anger in such a way that it replaces all other feelings, dulling them until nothing but anger can be felt anymore, is the first and most important step in becoming a Scourge.

Of all methods to reach lichdom, the process to become a Scourge is the least complex, but it's also the one where the resulting lich least resembles who they were before embracing unlife. The first step in this path towards lichdom is to experience a blinding, searing rage for as long as possible. Those who wish to become a Scourge train their anger like a skill, sharpening it like a blade, ensuring that every one of their thoughts is of anger and hate.

While in this state, a Scourge-to-be endeavors to cultivate this rage and hatred not just within themselves, but also within others, as that is the only way that Scourges can create their phylacteries. A Scourge phylactery, often called a vendetta, is any creature that deeply hates the Scourge. A part of the Scourge's soul lives on within the lands that the vendetta phylacteries feel for the Scourge. For as long as one creature viscerally hates the Scourge, the Scourge will come back to undeath if they are slain.

Once the lich-to-be has completely replaced their own soul with rage, once they have filled the hearts of their vendettas with hate towards the Scourge, and once their body cannot physically take the strain of their own rage anymore, the mortal dies and the undead Scourge awakens and begins their death march.

A Scourge's rage compels them to always march forward, and to destroy anything in their path. Like a one-man horde, they will destroy entire towns that stand in their way, mercilessly mowing through its inhabitants. But they will always leave survivors to cry for those killed by the walking Scourge, for those left behind are almost guaranteed to become new vendettas for the Scourge. These vendettas ensure the Scourge's ongoing existence as they continue their death march, like a stain upon the land contained to just one undying being.

If the Scourge is slain, they will come back like their lich brethren, but through a different process. The Scourge doesn't materialize next to a phylactery like other liches; their method of continued unlife is far more insidious. When a vendetta is created, a piece of the lich's soul lives within the anger that the vendetta feels for the Scourge. Upon a Scourge's death, that part of the lich's soul grows in power, along with the anger that the vendetta feels, until that anger transforms into searing hatred, and then blinding rage -- until it consumes the vendetta's soul and leaves the body as an empty vessel for the Scourge's soul to take over, granting the lich a new undead carcass with which to carry on their unending death march.

SCOURGE

Medium Undead, Any Alignment

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)
Hit Points 297 (33d8 + 140)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	18 (+4)	22 (+6)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +12, Con +12
Skills Athletics +12, Acrobatics +10, Insight +6, Intimidation +8, Perception +6
Damage Resistances Cold, Necrotic, Poison; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing when raging
Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Poisoned
Senses Darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages The languages it knew in life
Challenge 20 (25,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +6

All-Consuming Fury. When the Scourge is reduced to 0 hit points and has no remaining uses of its Berserker ability, its body explodes in necrotic flame. Each creature in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on the body of the Scourge must make a Dexterity saving throw (DC 20). A target takes 8d6 necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Rended. When the Scourge is reduced to 0 hit points, it instead rolls a number of hit dice equal to the number of hostile creatures within 30 feet of it and rises with that number of hit points. It then takes an extra turn. This turn comes immediately after the creature that damaged the Scourge in the initiative order, and can include an action, a bonus action, and movement. All attacks that the Scourge makes on this turn deal maximum damage on hit. The Scourge can't use this feature again until it finishes a long rest.

Deathly Rage. When the Scourge reaches three quarters of its health (223 HP), half (149 HP), and again at one quarter (74 HP) of its health, it takes an extra turn. This turn comes immediately after the creature that damaged the Scourge in the initiative order, and can include an action, a bonus action, and movement.

Inherited Hatred. A destroyed Scourge takes over the body of the vendetta whose hatred against the Scourge is the strongest. It takes the Scourge 2d6 weeks to take over the body of a vendetta.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the Scourge fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Reckless Attack. When the Scourge makes its first attack on its turn, it can decide to attack recklessly. Doing so gives it advantage on melee weapon attack rolls using Strength during this turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until its next turn.

Rising Rage. When the Scourge falls to three quarters of its health (223 HP), half (149 HP), and again at one quarter (74 HP) of its health, the damage die for its melee attacks increases. At three quarters, its damage die increases from a d6 to a d8; at half, it increases to a d10, and at one quarter, it increases to a d12.

Turn Resistance. The Scourge has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Actions

Multiattack. The Scourge makes four attacks: two with its greatsword and two with its fists.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6+6) slashing damage.

Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d6+6) bludgeoning damage plus 14 (4d6) necrotic damage.

Bonus Actions

Rage. The Scourge enters a rage. While raging, it gains the following benefits:
- It has advantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws.
- It has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage.
- It gains a +4 bonus to the damage roll of any melee weapon attack.

The Scourge can rage 4 times per long rest. Its rage ends only if it is knocked unconscious or chooses to end it.

Blind Fury. The Scourge takes a voluntary -1 penalty to Wisdom saving throws, but gains +1 to attack and damage rolls until the start of its next turn.

Legendary Actions

The Scourge can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Scourge regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. The Scourge makes a Fist attack.

Leap (Costs 2 Actions). The Scourge jumps using its inhuman strength, landing on a space within 15 feet that it can see without provoking attacks of opportunity.

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